Why Geography?

"During the next decade geography will move to center stage in our society as mobile, real-time, interactive geographic technologies and systems are adopted as core Operations Management tools in most large-scale private and governmental organizations, creating what I have termed “Geographic Management Systems.”

Doug Richardson, founder and president, GeoResearch, Inc.

Map of the Year Award
Each year, the Department of Geography and Mapping Sciences sponsors this contest so students are able to showcase the skills acquired in their GIS courses. Maps that have been made in coursework, for special projects, internships and work experiences are all eligible for entry. Students from across campus may enter. Winners are announced at the annual SGO banquet.

One of the winners of the 2013 Map of the Year.

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Geography and Mapping Sciences

**GEOGRAPHY AND MAPPING SCIENCES**

Geography is the study of people, places and environments. The focus of geographic inquiry is to understand interrelationships on the Earth’s surface. Geography is an integrating, hands-on discipline that focuses on the study of place and prepares people to understand the world’s complexity and seek solutions to its problems. Maps and Geographic Information Science (GISci) are the geographer’s best known tools and serve as fundamental practical applications to the discipline involving map design and the analysis of geographic patterns.

**UWRF GEOGRAPHY OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Geography Major**

Geography offers a major with a minor in GIS/Cartography and a major with any minor of a student’s choosing.

**Geographic Information Science**

Geographic Information Science (GISci) refers to the many branches of geospatial science and technology including Cartography, Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems. The use of GISci has become increasingly popular in the U.S. workplace.

Outreach Programs are available to:

- Individuals who want to obtain GISci knowledge to apply in their current workplace or increase their employment opportunities
- Individuals with an associate’s degree in geographic information science or a related field who want to earn a bachelor’s degree

**Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S) in GISci**

The curriculum includes 29-30 credits of university general education courses and 30-31 credits of core courses in GISci. Applicants who bring in fewer than 60 college credits from a previous degree plan will need to take additional courses.

**GISci Certificate Program**

Students complete three required courses and two elective courses that focus on their chosen area of specialization in GISci. In addition to finishing the coursework, students submit a final professional portfolio, complete an exit interview, and must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 upon completion of the program.

**Internships**

Geography and Mapping Sciences has an active internship program that introduces students to professional work experiences in the discipline. Our students may intern with organizations and companies using mapping and GIS technologies, such as:

- U.S. Natural Resources & Conservation Services (NRCS)
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Ramsey County, Minn.
- City of Red Wing, Minn.
- St. Croix County, Wis.

**Student Opportunities for Involvement**

The Student Geography Organization (SGO) provides an avenue for students interested in geography to interact and participate in group activities and field trips with their fellow students. SGO undertakes yearly projects and an awards banquet. The department maintains a charter chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the International Geography Honor Society.

**Facilities**

The Department of Geography and Mapping Sciences maintains a fully networked GIS lab, which is fully integrated into the curriculum. This lab, housed in the department, features state-of-the-art computer hardware and software which are continually updated.